

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS MALL ATTRIBUTES IN SHOPPING MALLS OF UDAIPUR

TANVI KHURANA¹ & SEEMA DWIVEDI²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science,
M. P. U. A. & T., Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

²Associate Professor, Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science,
M. P. U. A. & T., Udaipur, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to assess the level of customer satisfaction in shopping malls of Udaipur. The study was conducted in 3 shopping malls with a sample of 90 customers. Questionnaire technique was used for data collection. Frequency, percentage and mean percent score were used to analyse data. Overall, the customers were mostly satisfied with the mall attributes and very few of them were either on the extremes of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The factors which matter the most towards satisfaction were space in the mall and comfortable sitting areas, mall atmosphere and decor. Maintenance and cleanliness in the mall, availability of a variety and good quality of movies at the multiplex, availability of a wide range of items in terms of quality and pricing are also important determinants of satisfaction. Besides, availability of good bargains and helpful and supporting staff in the mall also influence satisfaction level. The satisfaction level of customers was: with convenience (77.77%), ambience (67.77%), property management (91.22%), entertainment (80%), product assortment (82.22%), product pricing (75.55%) and service (86.66%). Among mall attributes property management had the highest level of satisfaction (MPS=76.26) and product pricing was the least satisfactory (MPS= 67.32).

KEYWORDS: Shopping Mall, CUSTOMER Satisfaction, Mall Attributes & Retailing

Received: Jan 21, 2017; **Accepted:** Mar 02, 2017; **Published:** Mar 07, 2017; **Paper Id.:** IJEEFUSAPR20173

INTRODUCTION

The retailing sector in India has undergone significant transformation in the past 10 years. Retailing is gradually inching its way towards becoming the next boom industry. Traditionally, Indian retail sector has been characterized by the presence of large number of small-unorganized retailers. However, over the last half decade, the Indian consumer market has seen a significant growth of various retail formats such as malls, supermarkets, department stores, hypermarkets etc. Mall culture in India has grown with an incredible pace. According to Srivastava (2008) development of mega malls in India is adding new dimensions to the booming retail sector. Shopping experience in the nation of shopkeepers is changing and changing very fast. Malls are fast becoming sought-after entertainment hotspots. From a situation where there were no malls about a decade ago, the country has 300 malls translating to over 100 million sq. ft. is available mall space by the end of 2007. The malls have become a sensation in terms of changing the life style of Indians- the way they are shopping and socializing. With this transition taking place, the shopping behaviour of customers is likely to change as these formats were not in existence in the country until recently. Hence the present study was conducted with the objective to assess

customer satisfaction towards various mall attributes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in three malls of Udaipur city. A sample of 90 customers (30 from each mall) was selected for the present study. Questionnaire technique was used for data collection. The responses were taken on a 5-point scale: Strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). On the basis of score given the respondents were classified in extremely satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied and extremely dissatisfied categories. Frequency, percentage, Mean Weighted Scores and Mean Percent Scores were used for analysis of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Convenience

Convenience as an attribute includes location of the mall, modes of transportation, traffic congestion around mall, layout of the mall, ease in locating a store, space to move around in the mall, width of passages and aisles, comfortable sitting areas and location of stairs, escalators and elevators. Majority of the customers (77.77%) were satisfied with convenience in malls and the most satisfying aspects of convenience were spaciousness of malls, width of walking aisles/passages and location of stairs escalators and elevators.

Ambience

With ambience 67.77% customers were satisfied and lighting, mall atmosphere and decor and festival decorations were the most appealing aspects of ambience.

Property Management

A large majority (92.22%) of customers were satisfied with property management in malls and the most satisfying features were cleanliness of the mall, cleanliness and hygiene of washrooms and location of the washrooms.

Entertainment

Regarding entertainment, variety and good quality of movies offered at the multiplex, shopping being fun and enjoyable and the mall as an excellent place to take children and spend some time were the most attractive aspects and 80% customers were satisfied with entertainment in malls.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Satisfaction with Various Mall Attributes

S. No.	Attributes	Extremely satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied
1.	Convenience	8.88	68.88	22.22	0.00
2.	Ambience	3.33	64.44	30	2.22
3.	Property management	23.33	68.88	7.77	0.00
4.	Entertainment	14.44	65.55	20	0.00
5.	Product assortment	20	62.22	17.77	0.00
6.	Product pricing	11.11	64.44	24.44	0.00
7.	Service	11.11	64.44	24.44	0.00

Product Assortment

With product assortment, 82.22% customers were satisfied and maximum favour was given to mall being a good place to follow trends, ability to view a wide assortment of related items and the better quality of products in the mall.

Product Pricing

Three-fourth (75.55%) of the respondents were overall satisfied with product pricing in the malls and regular offer of discounts, satisfaction with price post-purchase and attractive discounts/schemes/deals were the most appealing aspects of product pricing.

Service

Regarding service in malls feeling of safety and comfort, getting required information from salesmen/customer care and the staff of the mall being helpful and supportive were the most satisfactory aspects and 86.66% respondents were satisfied with this attribute.

Table 2: Ranking of Mall Attributes by Satisfaction Level

S. No.	Attribute	Rank	MPS
1.	Convenience	IV.	71.2
2.	Ambience	V.	69.9
3.	Property management	I.	76.26
4.	Entertainment	VI.	69.82
5.	Product assortment	II.	72.92
6.	Product pricing	VII.	67.32
7.	Service	III.	71.6

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it can be seen that majority of the respondents were satisfied with the mall attributes whereas very few respondents were on the extremes of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Matzler *et al.* (2004) reported in their study that customer satisfaction has become increasingly important for mall retailers, as it may increase customer loyalty, cross-buying, positive word of mouth, and reduce price sensitivity. It has become an important issue which needs attention in the competitive retail scenario. The attributes which mattered the most towards satisfaction was property management as shown in Table 2. Product assortment was the second most satisfying attribute whereas product pricing was the least satisfactory of all. According to Anselmsson (2006), the underlying success factors of planned, centrally managed and large shopping malls in the retailing sector rotates around customer satisfaction in reference to selection, atmosphere, convenience, salespeople, refreshments, location, promotional activities and merchandising policy.

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